

Yorkshire Funders Forum

Barriers to Accessing Funding – Workshop (15/06/2022)

1. Lack of Infrastructure Support

Many areas in Yorkshire and Humber no longer any funding advisors

Action for Funders

- Funders to recognise the value of good funding advice services and seek in invest in infrastructure organisations to enable them to continue offering support.
- Funders to ensure they link potential applicants to local funding advice to avoid time wasting processing eligible and incomplete applications.
- Where appropriate and possible funders to work alongside funding advisors in delivering training and funding fairs for the voluntary sector

Action for Funding Advice Workers

- Infrastructure support to review gaps in services across the Yorkshire and Humber area and explore how we could fill those gaps in funding advice and support.

2. Difficulties opening bank accounts

Voluntary organisations are facing huge challenges in being able to open a bank account, this is especially prevalent for new organisations. This is delaying projects being able to apply for funding to deliver much needed services and activities. There is also challenges for groups accessing online banking, this is posing a huge problem accessing information about their accounts and being able to process payments efficiently.

Action for Funders

- This issue needs to be flagged on a national level for change to happen. Concerns should be highlighted with organisations such as NCVO.
- Funders to consider how they can overcome this issue – such as accepting that other organisations may hold funds on behalf of new, small organisations.

Action for Funding Advice Workers

- FAWN to work together to produce a fact sheet including how to get around this issue and details of banks and organisations that are opening accounts or handing funds for fledgling organisations (potential orgs – Hey Credit Union, Unity First Credit Union, Accountable)

2. Vague Funding Criteria

Many funders do not have informative websites with clear exclusions to their funds.

Action for Funders

- Improved accessibility including contact details for the funder
- Clear list of exclusions that a fund will not support
- More use of eligibility checkers prior to applying for a grant
- Reviews of failed applications and common pitfalls
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Action for Funding Advisors

- Flag common questions and issues groups are posing with specific funders

4. Language Barriers for groups with English as a second language

Huge challenges for groups that are unable to articulate their projects on a written funding application, this often coincides with confidence issues

Action for Funders

- Funders to be aware that the language used in guidance and application forms can be confusing, especially where jargon and acronyms are used.
- Videos to be used on funders websites to explain grant criteria and application processes
- Videos to be accepted as a way of applying for a grant
- Funders to offer support completing applications (or linking with local funding advice worker)
- Continue attendance at local funding fairs to facilitate more conversations with potential applicants.

Action for Funding Advice Workers

- Funding Advice workers to promote support available for groups with English as a second language
- Continue planning face to face events to encourage more open discussions around funding

5. Lack of funding for capital projects

Sheer volume of applications means many funders are not prioritising capital funding.

However a capital investment can often lead to positive outcomes impacting a community for a much longer period than revenue projects achieve.

Action for Funders

- Funders to recognise the value of capital investment in community facilities and the long term impact that can have on communities.
- Funders to recognise that capital investment is required for organisations to meet the requirements set out in the Green Agenda.

Action for Funding Advice Workers

- Funding Advice Workers to continue feeding in concerns about the lack of capital funding especially to larger funders such as the National Lottery Community Fund.

6. Quick turnaround applications

During the pandemic we have seen some fantastic responses from funders enabling projects to be delivered very quickly in response to need. It would be extremely helpful to continue some form of quick turnaround emergency funding to enable groups to respond to immediate needs they have within their communities.

Action for Funders

- Consider small, discreet, emergency funding programmes that can be processed and paid out in less than one month.